

AMONG the NEW BOOKS

WITH GEORGE GRIMES

Twelve Recent
Biographies of Men
Vital in Many Ways

THE LIFE AND STRANGE AND SURPRISING ADVENTURES OF DANIEL BOONE. By Paul Dotkin. (Macaulay, \$3.50.)

VOLTAIRE. The incomparable Infidel. By Joseph Lewis. (Free-thought Press, \$1.)

DONN BYRNE: Bard of Armagh. By Thurston Macauley. (Century, \$2.)

AUDACIOUS AUDUBON. By Edward A. Muschamp. (Brentano's, \$3.50.)

AN EPOCH AND A MAN: Martin Van Buren and His Times. By Denis Tilden Lynch. (Liveright, \$5.)

THE LIFE OF NAPOLEON. By Dimitri S. Merezhkovsky. (Dutton, \$3.50.)

PETER THE GREAT. By Stephen Graham. (Simon and Schuster, \$3.)

ALBERT, KING OF THE BELGIANS. By Evelyn Graham. Dodd, Mead, \$5.)

PAGANINI OF GENOA. By Lillian Day. (Macaulay, \$3.50.)

THE RAVEN: A Life Story of Sam Houston. By Marquis James. (Bobs, Merrill, \$5.)

JOHN BROWN: The Making of a Martyr. By Robert Penn Warren. (Payson and Clarke, \$5.)

FREDERICK THE GREAT. By Margaret Goldsmith. (Paper Books, 75 cents.)

These dozen biographies are listed together, because they are typical of the interest of present day readers in commanding figures of the past and present, for biography seems not to lose its interest and its lure, despite its great popularity for the past year or so. Everyone who can write seems to be devoting part of his time to the life of someone great or near-great, past or present. New facts are being dredged up, new interpretations of character given, until it seems that those who walked this earth, animated by some divine spark that lifted them above their fellows, will be completely analyzed, explained and essayed.

Now every one of the biographies here listed will have its appeal to a group of readers. The literary-minded will turn first to the stories of DeFoe and Donn Byrne.

Figures of different epochs and of different types were they. The one is known to most of us, alas, as only the author of a book we consider an excellent adventure story for boys, "Robinson Crusoe." The other, whose untimely death is still fresh in memory, was a weaver of exquisite and stirring romances.

The period in which DeFoe was a writer was really his decline; earlier in life he had been, first a merchant, then a politician.

Paul Dotkin is a Frenchman who has been painstaking, but not prosy, in his work on the life of DeFoe. He has been able to comprehend the amazing versatility of the man, to palliate his moral lapses, to appreciate his business acumen, and to appraise his skill as a writer. The man who could propose modern bankruptcy, who could advise King William, who could inaugurate, in a measure, modern journalistic technique, knew great success and great failure; and indeed, it was to retrieve failure that he wrote, in the final period of his life, his immortal books.

The Byrne book is by one who loved his friend, and the biography not only tells of the life of the bard of Armagh, but also contains an extremely valuable critical consideration of his novels. He wrote beautiful tales, but he had far to go to become a great writer, and death by accident cut him off. Because it is so pleasant to read his books, however, it is good to have fair and stimulating a story of the man as Mr. Macauley has written.

The little Voltaire book is by a man who appreciates the infidel. Joseph Lewis grows highly indignant over the state of morality, liberty, and ecclesiastical life when Voltaire appeared on the scene, and so his little book is as much an attack upon the bigotry of that and later days, as it is a document concerned with Voltaire.

Mr. Muschamp, with his "Audacious Audubon," has done his best to make the artist and naturalist and historian live again for us. But while paying full attention to the extraordinary genius of the man, and telling in lively fashion of his splendid wife and his courage in overcoming obstacles, he does not quite make, for me, Audubon to live.

Marquis James and Denis Tilden Lynch are two extremely competent writers. Consequently their two biographies, both of which deal with men active in significant epochs of American history, are valuable as stories to lend one a better appreciation of the things that went to make up the America we know today.

Martin Van Buren suffers the fate of all presidents who follow in the steps of the very great, or very sensational statesmen. He followed Andrew Jackson, and his story was necessarily dimmed by the greater lustre and force of his patron. Yet Van Buren had a most romantic career; he was a politician of great shrewdness, a statesman of brilliant attainments. He destroyed, as president, a corrupt banking system; he retired then, to lead, bravely and vigorously, the fight against slavery, and he unsuccessfully ran for the presidency as a free-seller, on practically the same platform on which Lincoln was later triumphantly elected.

Sam Houston was one of the most engaging figures in American history. Somehow his story seems to contain all that is full of vigorous adventure in the formation of this land. His rise to the governorship of Tennessee, his marriage to Eliza Allen and their inexplicable parting after 11 weeks of honeymoon, his departure for the west, and the stirring story of his building of the republic of Texas; are



Some
of
Ward
Lynd's
wood-
cuts
from
"God's
Man"

A Wordless Novel; Lynd Ward Tells Story in Woodcuts

GOD'S MAN. By Lynd Ward. (Cape and Smith, \$3.)

The first American novel to appear with the story told entirely in woodcuts, is "God's Man."

It is a book of great beauty, for Mr. Ward is an artist of power, and his woodcuts have been given the fitting setting of fine paper and excellent printing and binding. The book would make a much appreciated Christmas gift.

The story that is told in these more than a hundred pages is that of an artist who goes to the city, and there meets disillusion in the fields of commerce and of love. Each one who "reads" the book may get a different meaning, so I will not spoil anyone's pleasure by going into detail of my own interpretation.

There are, from first to last, but 10 words of printed type. These are the headings of the five divisions of the book—The Brush, The Mistress, The Brand, The Wife, The Portrait.

One needs no technical knowledge of the woodcut to know that here is great artistry.

Reading Between Lines

Best sellers of other days, as the Omaha Public Library reminds us, include Uncle Tom's Cabin, 1852; Ten Nights in a Bar Room, 1856; East Lynne in 1861; Adventures of Tom Sawyer, 1876; Prisoner of Zenda, 1894; Richard Carvel, 1899; The Jungle, 1906; Graustark, 1913; Winnie of Barbara Worth, 1913; Freckles 1914; Seventeen, 1916 . . . Eden Phillpotts, who is 68, was married to Miss Robina Webb at Exeter, England, October 17. . . . Sinclair Lewis is living in Vermont, writing short stories "until I get up enough energy to begin a new novel." Durward Grinstead, author of "Elva," has resigned as vice-consul in the American foreign service, and sailed from Hamburg, Germany, for home. . . . Richard Aldington, author of "The Death of a Hero," has had three proposals of marriage and an offer to go into the movies, since his book became a definite success. . . . Sumner N. Blossom, editor of Popular Science Monthly, has become supervising editor of the American Magazine to succeed Merle Crowell, who resigned because of ill health. . . . "A Farewell to Arms" is leading the fiction best sellers. . . . Warner Fabian's real name is Samuel Hopkins Adams.

In the Modern Library

The four newest titles of The Modern Library, maintaining the interesting standard of these limp-cover books at 95 cents, are Havelock Ellis' "The Dance of Life," Geoffrey Chaucer's "Canterbury Tales," Herman Sudermann's "The Song of Songs" and "An Anthology of American Negro Literature."

Havelock Ellis has written a new introduction to his book, "The Canterbury Tales" are given in the version of Walter W. Skeat. The Sudermann book is unabridged. The Negro literature anthology is edited by V. F. Calverton, and includes the writings of such Negroes as Booker T. Washington, Walter White, Claude McKay, Jean Toomer, Countee Cullen and others.



Cullen Shows Growing Power in New Poems

THE BLACK CHRIST. By Countee Cullen. (Harper's, \$2.50.)

Mr. Cullen, the Negro poet, grows in power with each volume of verse. His talent is full, demonstrated with the title poem in this book. It tells of a religious experience, built on the usual black tragedy. A Negro is slain by the mob—for another's crime—then, by a miracle he comes to life again. There is deep force, magnificent feeling in this poem; much beauty.

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but chapters of a life full of mystery and enchantment.

To the unfolding of the story Mr. James has brought skill. His style is direct, vigorous, charming. He cites his authority. His book is well illustrated, and carefully indexed. It is a fine achievement.

Napoleon, to Morezhkovsky, is the child of destiny; his life corresponds with the rising, full vigor, and setting of the sun. His life of Napoleon is lively, fascinating, told in an exciting sweep and rush which compresses, within a few paragraphs, what a less skilled writer would need pages to relate. It is an interesting biography to have.

Peter the Great was a man of destiny of a different type. Mr. Graham goes into careful detail about the man whose life was a contrast of public achievement and private orgy; who brought civilization to Moscow and in himself epitomized the barbarian. It is a personal narrative that is here told, of a czar who ruled in blood, and yet who brought his people along the path of destiny in tremendous leaps.

Another conqueror was Frederick the Great. Margaret Goldsmith's story is illustrated with reproductions of quaint and stimulating etchings, and she has managed to give, in a book that will not take an hour to read, a comprehensive and fair story of the life of the man who set Germany on its path of empire that met with so abrupt a halt in the world war.

Evelyn Graham manages to brush aside the veils that conceal kings of the present day, and to tell things that make them less puppets of royalty than men of blood. His King Albert is heroic, as we have come to believe the leader of the Belgians in the war was heroic. The book is primarily a war biography; it relates scenes and incidents that throw new light upon the war and its conduct from the allied side, and it gives us a pleasant story of a monarch who keeps popular in this day when kings totter on their thrones.

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